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To: the Labor and Public Employees Committee  
From: David Walsh, CSU-AAUP President  
Date: March 8, 2010  
Re: House Bill 5285

I am submitting testimony in support of House Bill 5285, *An Act Concerning State Employees and Violence and Bullying in the Workplace*. As the president of a union representing over 3,200 faculty, librarians, coaches, and counselors in the Connecticut State University System, I have heard of instances where our members have been bullied but there is little we can do to protect our members because bullying and abusive conduct are not illegal actions in Connecticut. For as many members who have come forward, there may be many other members who stay silent. In order to know the prevalence of the problem, it is crucial to track statistics of report incidents. However, these will only be reported if the State mandates it. Currently, only illegal acts of harassment directed against a protected class are now reported. Further, Connecticut statutes do not protect against abusive conduct, and workplace violence policies do not cover bullying unless and until it becomes violent. It is for that reason that our Executive Council passed a resolution supporting the passage of the *Healthy Workplace Bill* in 2008. HB5285 is not a Healthy Workplace Bill, but it's a step in the right direction.

According to a poll of 7,740 individuals - a representative sample of all American adults - conducted in August 2007 (<http://www.workplacebullying.org/research/WBI-Zogby2007Survey.html>):

- Bullying is 4 times more prevalent than illegal discriminatory harassment
- 62% of employers ignore the problem
- 45% of Targets suffer stress-related health problems
- 40% of bullied individuals never tell their employers
- Only 3% of bullied people file lawsuits

The State of Connecticut is an employer to over 75,000 employees. As an employer, the state should be an example to those in the private sector, especially when the cost to this bill is minimal.